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Date Event

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| February is National Library Lovers' Month | |
| Feb 27 | NRIS Seminar - Helena |
| March 2 | Read Across America Day |
| March 16 | Freedom of Informa- tion Day |
| March 19 | NRIS Seminar - Helena |
| March 26 | PEEL scholarship apps deadline |
| March 31 | Gates grant apps deadline |

BIG SKY LIBRARIES

Number 86

February/March, 2004

Bozeman Public Library Wins National Award

By Cindy Christin, Youth Services Librarian/Marketing Director, Bozeman Public Library

Representatives from the Bozeman Public Library were in Washington D.C. recently to receive the Institute of Museum and Library Services' National Award for outstanding community service. Brenda Davis, chair of the Board of Trustees, said, "We received this award because of the innovative and diverse programming developed by a very hardworking and talented staff." Joining Brenda for the White House ceremony were Library Director Alice Meister and patron Chuck Knighton, a father who wrote a winning essay on how the Library has enriched his life.



Chuck Knighton, essay contest winner, Brenda Davis, Library Board of Trustees Chair, and Alice Meister, Library Director, receive the IMLS award from First Lady Laura Bush January 22 in Washington, D.C. Photo by Steven E. Purcell

Bozeman Public Library was one of three libraries in the country to receive this annual award, which includes a \$10,000 gift. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is an independent federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners. Dr. Robert Martin, director of IMLS, visited Bozeman in November to attend a local award ceremony and meet with Library staff and supporters. He said, "Winning this award is like winning the Academy Award of libraries."

First Lady Laura Bush presented the 2003 IMLS awards on January 22 at the White House. "The museums and libraries we honor today have developed innovative partnerships and programs for learners of all ages, from babies to baby boomers to seniors," said Mrs. Bush. She went on to talk about Bozeman's "Books & Babies" program, in which "babies are introduced to books and language and parents learn the importance of reading to young children." She described Chuck Knighton's discovery of the Library when his son, Jack, was one, and Chuck had decided to stay at home with him. "At the Library, he can spend quality time with his son, Jack, and teach him lessons that will last a lifetime."

Mrs. Bush added that the administration is committed to strengthening America's libraries and museums. President Bush has proposed a 14% increase for IMLS and an increase of \$12 million for the Library Grants Program.

Library Director Alice Meister said, "I'm thrilled that the Bozeman Public Library has received a distinguished award from such a prominent organization. It validates the hard work of our staff and volunteers. We are grateful for the recognition."

The Library representatives and family members visited the Montana delegation in their D.C. offices, attended a reception at the White House, a banquet at the Willard Hotel, and had an opportunity to share their stories with the other award winners.

To learn more about IMLS, visit <http://www.imls.gov>. For more information about the Bozeman Public Library, go to <http://www.bozemanlibrary.org>. Chuck Knighton's essay is also available on the Library's website.



Karen Strege, Ph.D.

A Message from the State Librarian

I hope this message finds each of you staying warm. I know that I am looking forward to Spring and the renewed sense of energy it seems to bring us after our long Montana winters.

Many of you are in the process of following through on resolutions you may have made for the new year. One of our goals here at the State Library is to continue supporting the work of Montana's libraries by continuing with our marketing efforts. Our recent statewide marketing campaign, "Need it? Find it! @ your library" ended at the close of 2003. We are currently evaluating its impact, but some facts are available. The modest investment that MSL and the Montana Library Association made in community awareness messaging programs with the Montana Broadcaster's Association and Bresnan Communications, along with free airtime donated by Mountain Cable Marketing, have really paid off. Our initial investment of \$11,000 for radio and television time bought us nearly \$183,000 worth of airtime for the campaign's three public service announcements.

I would like to thank all participating broadcast stations for their tremendous support of Montana's libraries. I'd also like to express our appreciation to Stephenie Ambrose-Tubbs, Wiley Galt Gustafson, and Tom McGuane for their generous donation of time as our PSA spokespeople. To those libraries who incorporated the "Need it? Find

it! @ your library" materials into their local marketing efforts, our thanks as well.

Our focus during the past two months has been on marketing efforts for the librarian recruitment grant awarded to MSL by the Institute of Museum and Library and Services. We're working on developing a promotional campaign about the availability of the scholarships as well as promoting librarianship as a career to Montana residents.

We also plan to continue offering materials to promote libraries to state residents. One of the ways we hope to leverage our limited funds available for these efforts is to adapt the best from other state's programs. One example is the "When You Really Need to Know" campaign Washington State is using. The focus of this effort is clear ~ the Internet is no substitute for library services. You can listen to the radio announcements and view the television spots by visiting <http://www.librarysmart.com/working/home.asp>. We plan to explore the use of these announcements with their producers.

In addition, we are exploring the alternative of a focus campaign, perhaps borrowing from Idaho's lead in promoting reading to children. Idaho's materials are available for review at <http://www.lili.org/forlibs/advocacy/readtome-marketing.htm>.

We also plan to continue working with MLA to combine our funding and expertise to maximize our marketing plans. Look forward to announcements about a new campaign later this spring.

Former MSL Commissioner Dies

Eleanor Gray, former Miles City Public Library Board member and former Montana State Library Commissioner, passed away February 1 following a brief bout with cancer. Services were held on February 6.

Memorials may be made in Eleanor's honor to the Miles City Library Foundation or the Miles Community College Scholarship Fund.

She will be missed by family and friends.

Commission Report

By Caroline Bitz, Montana State Library Commissioner

What is it about libraries that attracts so many enthusiastic and dedicated people? Or does one become enthusiastic after becoming directly involved with libraries?

I first recognized this commitment in my own library, but since have been delighted to find that this excitement about library services is not limited to Havre. It's certainly exciting to see that this fervor seems to be statewide. People affiliated with libraries in general seem to be rolling up their sleeves and digging in. It seems that the people connected to the library system in one way or another share a vitality and vision for Montana's libraries. How lucky can the citizens of Montana be?

After serving on the Havre-Hill County Library Board for ten years, I was asked to serve on the Montana State Library Commission. What an honor I thought it would be to serve the citizens of Montana in an area that is of primary importance to me - literacy. I was excited but unsure of what to expect. After my brief time on the Commission, I have had the opportunity to visit many of our libraries around Montana and I keep seeing a positive common denominator - people who are dedicated to their patrons and libraries. We are all trying to successfully operate our libraries with different challenges in these changing times. Yes, there is a huge diversity within the library community, but many seem to share the same goals: informing, entertaining, educating, and enlightening as many Montanans as possible. That must be the juice that keeps those involved with libraries going, and constantly pushing for better services for their patrons.

The library associated individuals that I have had the privilege of meeting in the past few months meet the demands of their jobs with enthusiasm, passion, and knowledge. Obviously, there must be some

outstanding boards, Friends groups, and communities who recognize the irreplaceable services that modern libraries offer. It seems whether the library is in one of our large cities, or is a branch in a small farming community, librarians are excited about what they do.

"Libraries make an impact on the staff and on the patrons," according to Bonnie Williamson, Library Director at Havre-Hill County Library. "You have to feel that in your job you are making a difference." Bonnie believes that "the library can make the lives of all citizens more agreeable."

In a recent interview with American Libraries, Bill Gates related that librarians' enthusiasm has been a key part in the success of his computerization project. He emphasized, "The program was invaluable in terms of adding this new tool to the library, but also giving the librarians a chance to remind people of the central role that the library has in the community..."

Irregardless of the particular circumstance, Montana's librarians and staff seem to find creative ways of reaching their goals. Librarians have rewritten the definition of "If there's a will, there's a way." I am sure there are many library users who would find this to be true in their local libraries. Evidence of this would be the many positive responses from library patrons around the state. It is very encouraging for this new commissioner to see such a level of dedication and enthusiasm in our libraries for sharing information, providing many services, and making a positive impact in communities across Montana.



Caroline Bitz

Summer Institute 2004: Planning and Managing for Public Libraries

By Sue Jackson, MSL Federal Grants/Continuing Education Consultant

Montana State Library is very excited to announce that Sandra Nelson will be the primary trainer at this year's Summer Institute. Sandra is the author of several well-known ALA publications, including *The New Planning for Results* (2001) and *Managing for Results: Effective Resource Allocation for Public Libraries* (1999).

The Summer Institute, scheduled for the week of June 7 on the MSU Campus in Bozeman, will bring a group of public library directors together for a week of learning and networking. Registration materials will be available in March. Registration is limited to 40.

For more information, contact Sue Jackson (sujackson@state.mt.us or 1-800-338-5087) at MSL.

PEEL Scholarship Applications Due March 26

By Sue Jackson, MSL Federal Grants/Continuing Education Consultant

Scholarship applications are now being accepted for Montanans to attend graduate library school. The scholarships are available through the Montana State Library's "Professional Education and Employment for Librarians" (PEEL) grant, which was received from the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) "Recruiting and Educating Librarians for the 21st Century" program.

Six Montana residents will receive scholarships to attend an ALA-accredited graduate program and will then be required to work in a Montana public, school, or tribal library for a minimum of two years following graduation. Information about the PEEL scholarships ~ including application materials ~ is available on the MSL

web page: <http://msl.state.mt.us/greatcareer>.

Scholarship applications must be postmarked by March 26, 2004.

In addition to the scholarships, the PEEL grant will also provide stipends for two libraries (public, school, or tribal) to offer a professional level position to a scholarship recipient when he/she has completed the library degree program. A recruitment campaign to attract new people to the library profession is also being designed as part of the grant. Watch for a new web site featuring some of your colleagues from across the state.

For more information about the PEEL grant and scholarship program, please contact Sue Jackson (sujackson@state.mt.us or 1-800-338-5087) at MSL.

Rosebud County Library Joins State Depository Library Program

By Jim Kammerer, State Publications Center Coordinator

Rosebud County Library in Forsyth recently became the fourteenth library in Montana to join the State Depository Library Program.

Library Director Cheryl Hesser said, "Rosebud County Library serves a large area in both Rosebud and Treasure counties with many isolated people ~ isolated not only by rural living, but also by lack of contact and information from Helena and its agencies. We feel that we can do our patrons and the whole area a great service by providing them with access to materials which will help them gain current knowledge of Montana's state programs, decisions, and resources."

Administered by the State Publications Center at the Montana State Library, the depository library program provides local, no-fee access to state government information. All depository libraries receive the "core

collection," or those state publications deemed most essential for providing basic state reference service and supporting an informed citizenry. A partial listing of the core collection includes agricultural statistics, vital statistics, labor reports, the governor's budget, voter information pamphlets, the state government telephone directory, hunting and fishing regulations, etc. In addition, the depository libraries annually select which 26 state agencies they wish to receive publications from so that their collection is tailored to the specific information needs of their communities.

For more information about joining the State Depository Library Program, visit us at <http://msl.state.mt.us/lisd/spc/index.htm> or contact Jim Kammerer at MSL at 1-800-338-5087 or jkammerer@state.mt.us.

Gates Grant Applications Due March 31

By Sue Jackson, MSL Federal Grants/Continuing Education Consultant

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has awarded Montana \$198,720 to help public libraries purchase new public access computer equipment and fund Internet connectivity upgrades. The Staying Connected grant will also fund training for public library staff on ways to improve and increase public access computing in their communities.

Montana State Library (MSL) will award the equipment and connectivity upgrade money through a competitive grant process. The Networking Task Force (NTF) assisted MSL staff in preparation of application materials; four NTF members volunteered

to screen the applications and make recommendations to the State Library Commission for funding.


All public libraries and branches are encouraged to apply. Details about the grant and application materials are available on the MSL web site: <http://msl.state.mt.us/>. Applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2004.

For more information about the grant, contact Sue Jackson (sujackson@state.mt.us or 1-800-338-5087) at MSL.

NRIS Rolls Out New Web Applications

By Anastasia Burton, MSL Communications/Marketing Coordinator

Our Digital Library's Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) recently announced the availability of enhanced data offerings and web applications. MSdL Administrator Jim Hill said, "We're excited to start the new year by offering our web users improved data access and additional information. We encourage natural resource professionals, as well as the public, to visit our website to see the vast amount of data available to them whenever they need it."

 The GIS home page of NRIS has been reworked. New underlying applications have been built to provide an all-new "three-tier" data access system:

Tier 1, the "Map Library" includes a series of richly formatted pre-built maps in pdf or gif format. State, county, and watershed map series are available for viewing on-line, printing, or inserting into reports or presentations.

Tier 2 includes popular NRIS interactive applications, such as The Digital Atlas of Montana, (formerly known as Thematic Mapper) and TopoFinder I and II. These applications provide powerful Internet based tools that allow users to enter geographic search criteria, then view maps, summarize data, or download a variety of GIS data layers available via the system. Tier 3 is designed primarily for GIS professionals. It includes a new searchable "GIS Data List" and the "GIS Data Bundler," an application that allows users to pick an area, specify the GIS layers they want, and have the system 'clip, zip, and ship' the data to them in near real-time.

All three tiers can be found at <http://nris.state.mt.us/gis>.

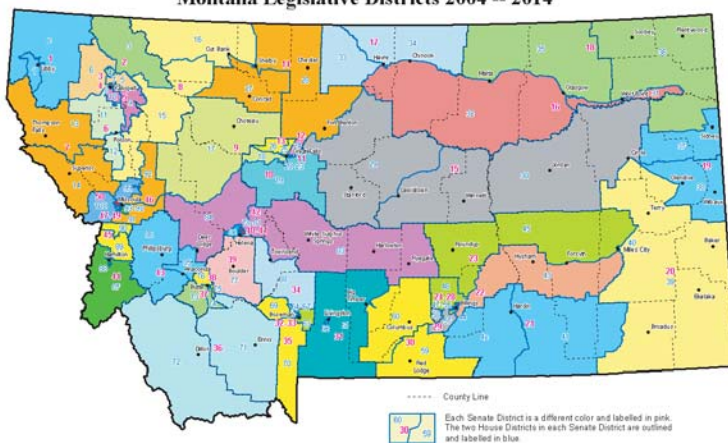
 NRIS, the Montana Department of Revenue, and


the Information and Technology Services Division (ITSD) of the Montana Department of Administration are pleased to announce the availability of updated Cadastral/CAMA data. The cadastral (land parcel ownership) data were obtained in late October from ITSD and the CAMA (computer assisted mass appraisal) data were obtained in December from the Department of Revenue.

NRIS has selected a subset of CAMA attribute data, joined it to the Cadastral layer, and made the results available in ESRI shapefile format at <http://nris.state.mt.us/nsdi/cadastral>. These

data are also available in their updated format via the Digital Atlas of Montana and the new GIS Data Bundler at <http://nris.state.mt.us/gis>. Cooperative procedures are now in place between the State Library, ITSD, and the Department of Revenue to support monthly updates to this data.

An example of what's available in the Montana Map Library
Montana Legislative Districts 2004 -- 2014



 The Montana Natural Heritage Program (NHP) - a program of NRIS is Montana's clearinghouse for information on our native species and habitats. The NHP has added a summary level of its Element Occurrence database to the Montana Digital Atlas. The Element Occurrence database is a statewide inventory of known locations of Montana Species of Concern. This application provides users an opportunity to tap into the EO database to identify Species of Concern that may exist within one or more public land survey sections (640 acres). Look for the EO information under the "Biological Data" tab in the Digital Atlas.

For more information regarding any of these new datasets and applications, contact NRIS at (406) 444-5354.

Telephone Pioneer Group Moves to the Talking Book Library

By Christie Briggs, MTBL Supervisor

The "Telephone Pioneers" is a group of retired telephone employees dedicated to a wide variety of community service projects all over the country. Talking Book Libraries in the United States, under the direction of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, have been the fortunate recipients of the Telephone Pioneer machine repairmen's work on playback machines for our blind and low vision patrons.

The Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL) has twelve Telephone Pioneer machine repairmen. Four volunteer here at the Montana State Library, three work from home, and five have been located at the telephone company's building in Helena for over 30 years. They have tested, repaired, reconditioned, and cleaned patron playback machines, cassettes, and headphones. These volunteers contribute an average of 2,014 hours per year and repair approximately 5,463 items annually.

Last year, Qwest Communications sold their building. To continue their valuable repair work, the Telephone Pioneers started looking for another place to set up shop. The best option was to move the repairmen and their equipment to MTBL. However, diminished space initially prevented such a move.

In effort to find a place for these valuable volunteers to continue their work, MTBL employees and volunteers collaborated to find a way to make room for them. By early December, reorganization of MTBL space was completed, and all Telephone Pioneer machine repairmen, their workstations, and equipment were moved.

We continue to be grateful for the Telephone Pioneers' dedicated work. They are a welcome addition to MTBL!

For more information about MTBL, contact Christie Briggs at 1-800-332-3400 or cbriggs@state.mt.us.

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